

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 206269

EXDIS SANTO DOMINGO FOR AMB YOUNG FROM UNA

FOLLOWING REPEAT PRETORIA 4728 ACTION SECSTATE INFO LONDON
LUSAKA MAPUTO DAR ES SALAAM AUG 15

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 4728

EXDIS
FROM LOW

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, PINT, RH

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: MEETING WITH MUZOREWA

1. SUMMARY: GRAHAM AND I MET ALONE WITH BISHOP MUZOREWA FOR
LITTLE OVER AN HOUR MONDAY MORNING, AUGUST 14. IT WAS A
DIFFICULT SESSION. THE BISHOP'S GROWING HOSTILITY TOWARDS
NKOMO, THE FRONT LINE, AND THE UK-US POLICY WAS MANIFEST.
END SUMMARY.

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2. WE STARTED OFF BY CONGRATULATING HIM ON HIS MEETING WITH
GUERRILLAS ON SATURDAY AND THE REAFFIRMATION OF HIS LEADERSHIP AT
THE UANC PROVINCIAL REPRESENTATIVES MEETING ON SUNDAY. HE
ACKNOWLEDGED HE WAS VERY PLEASED. GRAHAM REVIEWED THE
SITUATION SINCE OUR LAST MEETING TOGETHER, NOTING THAT
WE COULD NOT HELP BUT DETECT A CONTINUING SERIOUS SECURITY
PROBLEM IN THE COUNTRY. WE EXPLAINED AGAIN THE PROPOSAL

WHICH WAS DEVELOPING FOR AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING AT THE LEVEL OF PRINCIPALS. WE POINTED OUT THAT WHETHER THE POSITION OF THE TRANSITION GOVERNMENT WAS IMPROVING AND STRENGTHENING EVERY DAY AS HE SEEMED TO FEEL, OR WHETHER ITS PROBLEMS REMAINED UNRESOLVED AS WAS OUR VIEW, THERE COULD NOT HELP BUT BE AN ADVANTAGE TO SUCH A MEETING FROM HIS POINT OF VIEW. WE SAW INCREASING SUPPORT FOR THE IDEA OF A MEETING, NOT ONLY WITHIN THE COUNTRY BUT ABROAD, AS THE RECENT LEGISLATION PASSED BY THE U.S. CONGRESS INDICATED. INSIDE RHODESIA ONE GROUP AFTER ANOTHER EXPRESSED TO US THEIR SUPPORT FOR A CONFERENCE AND THEIR HOPE THAT A SETTLEMENT TO THE CONTINUING CONFLICT COULD BE BROUGHT ABOUT THAT WAY.

3. THE BISHOP ASKED HOW IT COULD BE THAT OUR INFORMATION WAS SO DIFFERENT FROM HIS. HIS PROVINCIAL REPRESENTATIVES MEETING THE DAY BEFORE HAD UNANIMOUSLY TURNED DOWN THE IDEA OF A MEETING. ONLY ONE OR TWO OF THE PROVINCIAL GROUPS EVEN HAD A QUESTION IN THEIR MINDS WHEN THEY CAME TO THE MEETING. HE IMPLIED THAT OUR ASSESSMENT WAS BIASED AND THAT THERE WAS AN ATTEMPT TO "TWIST" THE SITUATION TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT HE ALONE WAS HOLDING OUT AGAINST A CONFERENCE. WE LISTED THE ORGANIZATIONS WHO HAD EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR A CONFERENCE INCLUDING THE MAJOR NEWSPAPERS IN SALISBURY -- BOTH BLACK AND WHITE -- WHICH COULD HARDLY BE ACCUSED OF BEING BIASED.

4. AS THE CONVERSATION DEVELOPED, MUZOREWA'S BITTERNESS OVER WHAT
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HE CONSIDERED THE PARTIALITY OF THE WORLD TOWARDS THE PATRIOTIC FRONT BECAME MORE AND MORE EVIDENT. WE POINTED OUT THAT HE HAD ACCEPTED OUR PROPOSALS IN SEPTEMBER OF LAST YEAR BASED ON AN IMPARTIAL TRANSITION AND ELECTION AND THAT WE HAD RESISTED ZAMBIA'S EFFORTS IN THE FALL TO SEEK A SOLUTION ON THE BASIS OF A TURNOVER OF POWER TO THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WITHOUT AN ELECTION. HE COUNTERED THAT THE MALTA CONFERENCE HAD UNMASKED OUR WILLINGNESS TO MAKE A SEPARATE DEAL WITH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. WE ARGUED THAT ON THE CONTRARY, WE HAD ACHIEVED A SIGNIFICANT MODIFICATION OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT'S VIEWS AT MALTA AND OUR PROPOSAL FOR A GOVERNING COUNCIL, OF WHICH SIX OF THE MEMBERS WOULD BE FROM THE PRESENT SALISBURY GROUP AGAINST FOUR FOR THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, WAS AN EFFORT TO PROTECT THE INTERESTS OF ALL THE NATIONALISTS INsofar AS POSSIBLE.

5. MUZOREWA BECAME MORE AND MORE FRANK. HE SAID WE COULD ARGUE AS WE WISHED IN FAVOR OF AN ALL-PARTIES CONFERENCE BUT WE SHOULD NOT PRETEND THAT THE UK AND US WERE NOT PATENTLY FAVORING THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. WE HAD BOUGHT KAUNDA'S POSITION HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER AND DID NOT CARE WHAT WOULD HAPPEN SO LONG AS NKOMO BECAME PRESIDENT. WE SAID WE DID NOT THINK THAT WAS AN ACCURATE DESCRIPTION OF OUR POSITION OR OF

THAT OF THE FRONT LINE, AND THAT AS A MATTER OF FACT, IN CONVERSATIONS WITHIN THE LAST FEW WEEKS WITH THE THREE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS, MACHEL, NYERERE, AND KAUNDA, ALL HAD EXPRESSED THE POSITION THAT MUZOREWA HAD A ROLE TO PLAY AND THAT THEY WOULD ACCEPT HIM AS HEAD OF A FREELY ELECTED GOVERNMENT. NYERERE HAD SPECIFICALLY EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT HE HAD A MAJOR ROLE TO PLAY, AND MACHEL FELT SIMILARLY. MUZOREWA'S REPLY WAS TO SAY THAT THAT MAY BE WHAT THEY WERE TELLING US, BUT HE KNEW WHAT THEY REALLY THOUGHT. THERE WAS NO ROOM IN THEIR CONCEPTION OF WHAT WAS ACCEPTABLE IN AN INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE FOR HIMSELF. MACHEL HAD RESTRICTED HIM TO HIS RESIDENCE WHEN HE TRIED TO SEE THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS FROM MAPUTO IN 1976. KAUNDA HAD ONLY ACCEPTED HIM WHEN HE HAD NO OTHER CHOICE IN 1974. WE PROTESTED THIS VIEW OF THE FRONT LINE POSITION AND EVEN MORE SO OF OUR OWN SUPPOSED CONFIDENTIAL

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ACCEPTANCE OF IT, WHICH WE REPEATED WAS NOT AN ACCURATE DESCRIPTION OF OUR POSITION DURING THE PAST TWELVE MONTHS. HE HAD NO ANSWER TO OUR QUESTION OF WHY WE SHOULD BE SO PLIANT TO PRESIDENT KAUNDA'S POINT OF VIEW.

6. AT THE END OF THE CONVERSATION WE THANKED HIM FOR HIS TIME. HE READILY AGREED THAT THOUGH WE DID NOT SEE THINGS THE SAME WAY, WE SHOULD CONTINUE OUR DISCUSSIONS WHENEVER IT WAS USEFUL.

7. COMMENT: AS THE BISHOP'S POSITION WEAKENS, HE IS INCLINED TO BLAME SCAPEGOATS OUTSIDE THE ARENA IN WHICH THE STRUGGLE IS TAKING PLACE AND CLING OBSTINATELY TO WHAT HE ALREADY HAS. I CAN ONLY, THEREFORE, CONCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

A. THE BISHOP WILL NOT VOLUNTARILY AGREE TO ATTEND AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING OF ANY KIND. HE MIGHT NEVERTHELESS BE PERSUADED TO GO TO SUCH A MEETING BUT ONLY (1) AFTER CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE FROM SMITH, AND (2) IF HIS MORE POLITICALLY ASTUTE ADVISERS (PARTICULARLY CHICKEREMA) COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THERE IS MORE TO BE GAINED THAN LOST FROM GOING TO A MEETING.

B. UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE THAT THE BISHOP WOULD AGREE TO GO TO A MEETING IN ZAMBIA, WHETHER OR NOT HE HAD BEEN FORMALLY INVITED BY KAUNDA. I BELIEVE WE SHOULD THEREFORE BEGIN THINKING OF AN ALTERNATIVE VENUE AGAIN AS A PRICE OF A CONFERENCE WHICH INCLUDES MUZOREWA.

C. WE MAY ALSO WANT TO BEGIN THINKING OF WHETHER OR NOT WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN A CONFERENCE WHICH MUZOREWA DID NOT ATTEND. IT IS NOT AT ALL CLEAR THAT SMITH WOULD BE INTERESTED IN SUCH A MEETING AND IT COULD NOT BE TERMED AN "ALL-PARTIES" MEETING. EDMONDSON. UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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